United Nations ST/AI/2000/17

Secretariat

11 December 2000

Administrative instruction

Assignment grant

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1 and for the purpose of implementing the provisions of staff rules 107.20 and 203.10, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1
General provisions

Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the assignment grant (the "grant") is to provide staff members with a reasonable cash amount for relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer to a duty station. It is the total compensation payable by the Organization for costs incurred by the staff member and his/her family members as a result of an appointment, assignment or transfer involving relocation, as well as any pre-departure expenses that the staff member may incur as a result.

Elements

1.2 The grant consists of:

(a) A daily subsistence allowance (DSA) portion, payable in accordance with section 2; and

(b) A lump-sum portion, payable in accordance with section 3.

The conditions of payment of each portion of the grant are summarized in annex I to the present instruction.

Eligibility

1.3 Staff in the Professional and higher categories, Field Service staff, internationally recruited General Service staff appointed under the 100 series of the Staff Rules and project personnel appointed under the 200 series of the Staff Rules shall be eligible for payment of the grant, provided they meet the requirements set out in the present instruction. The grant, however, shall not be payable in connection with appointment or assignment to a special mission.

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1.4 An eligible staff member shall normally be entitled to payment of the grant when he or she has been authorized to proceed on travel involving relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer, and when the period of service at the new duty station is expected to be for at least one year.

1.5 The grant shall not be paid to a staff member recruited from the area within commuting distance of the duty station unless he or she demonstrates that it was necessary to change accommodation as a direct consequence of the appointment, for instance after moving out of a house formerly provided by his or her Government. Other accommodation changes within the area of commuting distance, and promotion or conversion to the Professional category at the same duty station, shall not give rise to payment of the grant.

1.6 When the appointment or assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General, under staff rule 103.7 (d) (ii) or staff rule 203.9 (d), has decided to apply the post adjustment applicable to the duty station and related entitlements such as the assignment grant, the grant shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of section 6.2.

1.7 The grant shall be paid to eligible staff who are assigned or transferred from one duty station to another within the same country, provided the assignment or transfer necessitates a change of accommodation.

Categories of duty stations

1.8 The amount of the grant may vary depending upon the classification of the duty station to which a staff member is appointed or assigned, as shown in annex I to the present instruction. All duty stations are placed by the International Civil Service Commission in one of six categories of duty stations, i.e., H and A to E. The H category comprises headquarters duty stations and other duty stations having similar conditions of life and work. The A to E categories comprise all other duty stations, classified by order of difficulty of conditions of life and work. Staff are informed of the category of their duty station by an annual information circular which may be amended in the course of the year owing to a change in classification.

Spouses who are both staff members

1.9 When a staff member is married to another staff member or to a staff member of another organization of the United Nations common system, payment of the grant to one or both spouses shall be governed by section 4.

Section 2
DSA portion

2.1 The DSA portion shall normally consist of subsistence allowance for 30 days at the daily rate applicable at the duty station in respect of the staff member and at half such daily rate in respect of each family member for whom the staff member had an entitlement to travel expenses to the duty station at the time of initial appointment, assignment or transfer to the duty station, and for whom such travel expenses have been paid by the Organization.

2.2 At duty stations other than those classified in the H category, the normal 30-day period may be extended up to a maximum of 90 days, in accordance with staff rules 107.20 (c) (ii) and 203.10 (c).

DSA portion in respect of eligible family members

2.3 Entitlement to the DSA portion of the grant in respect of any eligible family member shall arise when the following conditions are met:

(a) The family member travels at United Nations expense, in compliance with the rules governing official travel of family members, and

(b) The family member arrives at the duty station at least six months prior to the date on which the staff member's service at the duty station is expected to end. This requirement may be waived in respect of dependent children attending an educational institution outside the duty station.

Computation and currency of payment

2.4 The DSA portion of the grant at each duty station shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of the administrative instruction on the system of daily subsistence allowance,[1] subject to the following adjustments:

(a) When a special DSA rate has been established for specified hotel(s) at a particular location, the special rate shall be payable only upon provision of a certification from the senior administrative officer concerned that the staff member or an eligible family member had no alternative but to stay for a number of days at that specified hotel, and upon presentation of receipted hotel bills. The remainder of the DSA portion of the grant shall be calculated on the basis of the regular DSA rate for the duty station;

(b) When the normal 30-day period has been exceptionally extended in accordance with section 2.2, the DSA portion of the grant for the period of the extension may not exceed 60 per cent of the applicable DSA rate.

2.5 The DSA portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances.[2]

Section 3
Lump-sum portion

3.1 Entitlement to the lump-sum portion of the grant and its amount depend on the ICSC classification of the duty station according to conditions of life and work, the duration of the assignment, and the existence of an entitlement to payment of removal costs of personal effects and household goods under staff rule 107.27 ("removal entitlement").

Category H duty station

3.2 A staff member who is appointed or assigned to a category H duty station shall receive a lump-sum payment of one month's emoluments, as defined in sections 3.6

[1] ST/AI/1998/3 of 23 January 1998, entitled "System of daily subsistence allowance".
[2] ST/AI/402 of 23 March 1995, entitled "Currency of payment of salaries and allowances".

and 3.7, provided that he or she does not have a removal entitlement to that duty station.[3]

3.3 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall not be payable to locally recruited staff members who return to their parent duty station after an assignment to an established mission during which they were temporarily converted to the Field Service category.

Category A to E duty stations

3.4 A staff member who is appointed or reassigned for one year or longer to a category A to E duty station, and has a removal entitlement, shall receive a lump-sum payment of one month's emoluments, as defined in sections 3.6 and 3.7.

3.5 A staff member who is appointed or reassigned for one year or longer to a category A to E duty station, and does not have a removal entitlement, shall receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to:

(a) One month's emoluments if the duration of the assignment is expected to be of one year or longer but less than three years; or

(b) Two months' emoluments if the assignment is expected to be for three years or longer.

Computation

3.6 For staff in the Professional and higher categories, Field Service staff and project personnel, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall consist of the staff member's net base salary and post adjustment at the duty station of appointment or assignment, at his or her grade and step on the date of appointment or reassignment. Eligible staff members with recognized dependants shall receive a lump sum based on the emoluments at the dependency rate, whether or not the dependants travel to the duty station.

3.7 For internationally recruited General Service staff, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be calculated as follows:

(a) For staff members without recognized dependants, the lump-sum portion shall be determined on the basis of the net base salary at the grade and step of the staff member on the date of appointment or assignment, plus language allowance, if any;

(b) For staff members who are entitled to payment of a dependency allowance for a dependent spouse, the monthly amount of the allowance applicable at the duty station of appointment or reassignment shall be included in the computation of the lump-sum portion. If no dependency allowance is payable for the spouse, the monthly amount of the dependency allowance payable in respect of the first dependent child shall be included in the computation.

3.8 If an assignment of less than three years is extended to three years or longer, the second lump-sum payment shall be computed on the basis of the staff member's emoluments at the time the payment falls due.

[3] At category H duty stations, removal entitlement is normally paid in the case of assignment for a period of two years or longer, as provided by section 4.2 of ST/AI/2000/2 of 10 March 2000, entitled "Mobility and hardship allowance".

Currency of payment

3.9 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances.[3]

Section 4
Special conditions applicable when husband and wife are staff members

4.1 When a staff member is married to another staff member or to a staff member of another organization of the United Nations common system and each spouse travels on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to the same duty station:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to the duty station shall be paid to the staff member on whom they are recognized as being dependent;

(c) Only one lump sum shall be paid, normally to the higher graded spouse and on the basis of his or her emoluments.

4.2 When both spouses travel on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to different duty stations:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to one of the duty stations where their parents are assigned shall normally be paid to the parent on whom they are recognized as being dependent, unless the child accompanies the other parent and both staff members request that the DSA portion be paid to that other parent;

(c) Each staff member shall receive the lump-sum portion applicable to his or her situation, in accordance with section 3.

Section 5
Timing of payment of the grant

5.1 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of the staff member and the lump-sum portion are normally payable on commencement of duties at the duty station, or on the date of conversion to an appointment giving rise to payment of the grant.

5.2 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of eligible family members is payable on the actual date of arrival of each family member at the duty station.

Advance against lump-sum portion

5.3 An advance of 80 per cent of the lump-sum portion of the grant, as computed at the time the advance payment is made, may be paid up to three months in advance of travel of a staff member assigned or transferred to a new duty station.

5.4 No advance against the lump-sum portion may be made in the case of initial appointments.

5.5 When an advance is paid, the releasing office shall so notify the receiving office, which shall make the necessary adjustments upon the staff member's arrival at the new duty station.

Section 6
Adjustment/recovery

Return to the same duty station

6.1 When a change of official duty station or a new appointment involves a return to a place at which the staff member was previously stationed, and where an assignment grant had been paid, the full amount of the grant shall be paid only when the staff member has been absent from that place for at least one year. In the case of a shorter absence, the amount payable shall be that proportion of the full grant that the completed months of absence bear to 12 months.

Appointment or assignment of less than one year

6.2 When the appointment or assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General has decided to pay post adjustment and related entitlements, including assignment grant, as provided in section 1.6:

(a) The DSA portion of the grant shall be paid in full;

(b) The lump-sum portion, where payable in accordance with section 3, shall be prorated in the proportion that the number of months of appointment bears to 12 months.

Should the appointment or assignment be subsequently extended to one year or longer at the same duty station, the staff member shall receive the balance of the lump-sum portion which would have been paid had the initial appointment been for one year or longer.

6.3 When the appointment or assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year with initial payment of subsistence allowance, and the decision is subsequently taken to extend the service of the staff member at the same duty station and to pay the staff member post adjustment and related entitlements as provided in section 1.6 instead of subsistence allowance, the staff member shall be entitled to payment of the grant (both DSA and lump-sum portion, where applicable) at the time of the decision provided the following conditions are met:

(a) The total expected period of service at the duty station, both while receiving subsistence allowance and afterwards, is at least 12 months;

(b) The extension occurs at least six months prior to the expected end of the assignment at the duty station.

However, when subsistence allowance has been paid for six months or longer prior to the extension of the appointment, the staff member shall not be entitled to the DSA portion of the grant, but only to the lump-sum portion, where payable in accordance with section 3.

Reduction in period of service at the duty station

6.4 The DSA portion of the grant paid on arrival at the duty station shall normally not be recoverable.

6.5 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall be adjusted or recovered as follows when the staff member has not completed the period of service in respect of which the lump-sum portion of the assignment grant has been paid:

(a) When a one-month lump sum has been paid and the completed period of service at the duty station is less than one year, the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be prorated and recovered or adjusted in the proportion that the period of service at the duty station bears to one year. No recovery shall be made if the staff member completes his/her first year of service at the duty station.

(b) When a two-month lump sum has been paid and the completed period of service at the duty station is less than three years, the lump sum shall be adjusted/recovered as follows:

(i) If the completed period of service at the duty station is less than one year, the first month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the period of service bears to the first year (12 months) of assignment. The second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(ii) If the completed period of service at the duty station is one year or more but less than two years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(iii) If the completed period of service at the duty station is more than two years but less than three years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the completed period of service in the third year of assignment (i.e., the period exceeding 24 months) bears to the third year (12 months) of assignment;

(iv) If the completed period of service at the duty station is three years or more, the lump sum shall not be recovered/adjusted.

The provisions of this section are summarized in annex II to the present instruction.

6.6 The Secretary-General may grant an exception to the provisions of section 6.5 for compelling and/or compassionate reasons (e.g., health, reduction of the duration of assignment at the direction of the Organization or for other reasons beyond the control of the staff member).

Section 7
Final provisions

7.1 The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 January 2001.

7.2 Administrative instructions ST/AI/364, ST/AI/364/Add.1 and ST/AI/364/Add.2 are hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Joseph E. **Connor**
Under-Secretary-General for Management

Annex I

Summary of the payment of the assignment grant by category of duty stations

DSA portion

	Category A-E duty stations	*Category H duty stations*
For both removal and non-removal cases	30 days' DSA plus 30 days' DSA at half the DSA rate for each eligible family member for whom travel has been paid by the Organization	30 days' DSA plus 30 days' DSA at half the DSA rate for each eligible family member for whom travel has been paid by the Organization

Plus
Lump-sum portion

	Category A-E duty stations	*Category H duty stations*
For non-removal cases only	One month's lump sum, for assignments of one year or more, but less than three years	One month's lump sum
	Two months' lump sum, for assignments that are expected to be of a duration of three years or more	—
	If an assignment of less than three years' duration is subsequently extended to three years or more, a second one-month lump sum is payable at the beginning of the third year	—
For removal cases only	One month's lump sum	No lump sum

Annex II

Summary of arrangements for recovery/adjustment of advance payment of assignment grant due to reduction in period of service to the duty station

Amount of lump sum paid	*Period of completed service*	*Recovery adjustment*
One month	Less than one year	On a 1-to-12 basis
One month	One year or more but less than two years	No recovery
Two months	Less than one year	On a 1-to-12 basis in respect of the first month and full recovery of the second month
Two months	One year or more but less than two years	No recovery in respect of the first month but full recovery of the second month
Two months	More than two years but less than three years	No recovery in respect of the first month and prorated recovery of the second month on a 1-to-12 basis